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Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph [0013] beginning at page 4, line 6, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--A method for polishing objects in accordance with another embodiment includes transporting an object to be polished to a load-and-unload cup, moving the load-and-unload cup to an a first object carrier, loading the object onto the first object carrier, moving the first object carrier so that the object on the first object carrier is placed on at least one polishing surface, and polishing the object on at least one polishing surface.--

Please replace the paragraph [00110] beginning at page 19, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- With reference to Fig. 11, a polishing unit 520 according to a second alternative embodiment is described. The polishing unit 520 comprises one polishing table 156 with a polishing pad 155, two wafer carriers 162a and 162b, and one wafer relay device 180. The wafer carriers 162a and 162b are positioned over the polishing table 156. The wafer relay device 180 is positioned between the wafer carriers 162a and 162b in such a manner that the load/unload cup 182 of the wafer relay device 180 can be pivoted about the pivoting point 185, which is located over surface of the polishing pad 155, to the wafer load/unload positions of the wafer carriers 162a and 162b by the pivoting motions A and B, respectively. The pivoting point 185 is located on a pivoting axis that perpendicularly intersects the surface of the polishing pad 155.--

Please replace the paragraph [00116] beginning at page 20, line 18, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The first wafer relay device 180x is positioned between the first and second wafer carriers 162a and 162b in such a manner that the load/unload cup 182x of the first wafer relay device 180x can be pivoted about the pivoting point 185x to the

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wafer load/unload positions of the first and second wafer carriers 162a and 162b by the pivoting motions A and B, respectively. The second wafer relay device 180y is positioned between the third and fourth wafer carriers 162c and 162d in such a manner that the load/unload cup 182y of the second wafer relay device 180y can be pivoted about the pivoting point 185y to the wafer load/unload positions of the third and fourth wafer carriers 162c and 162d by the pivoting motions C and D, respectively. The pivoting points 185x and 185y are located on pivoting axes that are perpendicular to the surface of the polishing pad 155.--

Please replace the paragraph [00131] beginning at page 24, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The first wafer relay device 180x is positioned between the first and second wafer carriers 162a and 162b in such a manner that the load/unload cup 182x of the first wafer relay device 180x can be pivoted about the pivoting point 185x to the wafer load/unload positions of the first and second wafer carriers 162a and 162b by the pivoting motions A and B, respectively. The second wafer relay device 180y is positioned between the second and third wafer carriers 162b and 162c in such a manner that the load/unload cup 182y of the second wafer relay device 180y can be pivoted about the pivoting point 185y to the wafer load/unload positions of the second and third wafer carriers 162b and 162c by the pivoting motions C and D, respectively. The pivoting points 185x and 185y are located on pivoting axes that are perpendicular to the surface of the polishing pad 155.--

Please replace the paragraph [00143] beginning at page 27, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--With reference to Fig. 17, a polishing unit 580 according to a fifth alternative embodiment is described. The polishing unit 580 comprises two polishing tables 156a and 156b with respective polishing pads 155a and 155b, two wafer carriers 162a and 162b, and one wafer relay device 180. The wafer carriers 162a and 162b are positioned over the polishing tables 156a and 156b, respectively,

and polish wafers on the polishing tables 156a and 156b using the polishing pads 155a and 155b, respectively.--

Please replace the paragraph [00158] beginning at page 30, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--With reference to Fig. 21, a polishing unit 620 according to a seventh alternative embodiment is described. The polishing unit 620 comprises two polishing tables 156a and 156b with respective polishing pads 155a and 155b, two wafer carriers 162a and 162b, and two wafer relay devices 180x and 180y. The wafer carriers 162a and 162b are positioned over the polishing tables 156a and 156b, respectively, and polish wafers on the polishing tables 156a and 156b using the polishing pads 155a and 155b, respectively. The first and second load/unload cups 182x and 182y transfer wafers to and from the first and second wafer carriers 162a and 162b, respectively. The first and second load/unload cups 182x and 182y can be pivoted about the pivoting points 185x and 185y, respectively, to the wafer load/unload positions of the first and second wafer carriers 162a and 162b by the pivoting motions A and B, respectively. The pivoting points 185x and 185y are located on pivoting axes that are perpendicular to the surface of the polishing pad 155.--

Please replace the paragraph [00159] beginning at page 30, line 30, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--With reference to Fig. 22, a method of processing semiconductor wafers in the polishing unit 620 is described. This method comprises the steps illustrated in Fig. 22. At step 2600, a first wafer is transferred to the first wafer carrier 162a over the first polishing table 156a ~~156~~ by the first wafer relay device 180x. This step comprises sub-steps of (1) positioning the first wafer on the load/unload cup 182x at its parking position X, (2) transferring the load/unload cup 182x to the wafer load/unload position of the first wafer carrier 162a over the first polishing table 156a by its pivoting motion A, (3) loading the first wafer onto the first wafer carrier 162a, and (4) transferring the load/unload cup 182x back to its parking position X. Next, at

step 2610, the first wafer is polished on the first polishing table 156a using the polishing pad 155a.--

Please replace the paragraph [00167] beginning at page 32, line 31, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Next, at step 2735, a second wafer is transferred to the wafer carrier 162 by the load/unload cup 182x of the first wafer relay device 180x. This step comprises sub-steps of (1) positioning the second wafer on the load/unload cup 182x at its parking position X, (2) transferring the load/unload cup 182x to the wafer load/unload position of the wafer carrier 162 over the polishing table 156 by its pivoting motion A, (3) loading the second wafer onto the wafer carrier 162, and (4) transferring the load/unload cup 182x 182y back to its parking position X. The second wafer is then polished on the polishing table 156 using the polishing pad 155, at step 2740.--

Please replace the paragraph [00180] beginning at page 36, line 6, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--With reference to Fig. 29, a polishing unit 700 according to an eleventh alternative embodiment is described. The polishing unit 700 comprises two polishing tables 156a and 156b with respective polishing pads 155a and 155b ~~156a and 156b~~, two wafer carriers 162a and 162b, and the dual cup wafer relay device 685. The wafer carriers 162a and 162b are positioned over the polishing tables 156a and 156b, respectively.--

Please replace the paragraph [00181] beginning at page 36, line 12, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The first and second load/unload cups 182x and 182y can be pivoted about the pivoting point 185 to the wafer load/unload positions of the wafer carriers 162b and 162a, respectively, by the pivoting motion E. Therefore, the dual cup wafer relay device 685 can transfer two wafers at a time to or from the first and second wafer carriers 162a and 162b. The pivoting point 185 is located on a pivoting axis that is

perpendicular to the surface of the polishing pad 155. In a modified embodiment, the first load/unload cup 182x can transfer wafers to and from the first wafer carrier 162a by the pivoting motion A and the second load/unload cup 182y can transfer wafers to and from the second wafer carrier 162b by the pivoting motion B.--

Please replace the paragraph [00193] beginning at page 39, line 9, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Next, at step 3335, a second wafer is transferred to the wafer carrier 162 by the first load/unload cup 182x of the dual cup wafer relay device 685. This step comprises sub-steps of (1) positioning the second wafer on the load/unload cup 182x at its parking position X, (2) transferring the load/unload cup 182x to the wafer load/unload position of the wafer carrier 162 over the polishing table 156 by its pivoting motion A, (3) loading the second wafer onto the wafer carrier 162, and (4) transferring the load/unload cup 182x ~~182y~~ back to its parking position X. The second wafer is then polished on the polishing table 156 using the polishing pad 155, at step 3340.--

Please replace the paragraph [00211] beginning at page 44, line 30, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Even though the polishing apparatus 6000 has been described with reference to Fig. 35 as comprising the three polishing units 600a, 600b and 600c, the polishing apparatus 6000 may comprise more than three polishing units 600. Furthermore, the polishing apparatus 6000 can comprise any polishing units that are selected from the polishing units 150 ~~units 150~~, 500, 520, 540, 560, 580, 600, 620, 640, 660, 680, 700 and 720 described with reference to Figs. 1-32. As an example, Fig. 36 shows the polishing apparatus 6000 comprising the three polishing units 520a, 520b and 520c.--

Please replace the paragraph [00225] beginning at page 48, line 27, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In an exemplary operation of the polishing apparatus 9000, a first group of wafers is transferred from the wafer input station 130 to the first polishing unit 600a by the first wafer transport device 140 and then polished in the first polishing unit 600a using a first kind of slurry and a first kind of polishing pad. A second group of wafers is transferred from the wafer input station 130 to the second polishing unit 600b by the first wafer transport device 140 and then polished in the second polishing unit 600b ~~600a~~ using the first kind of slurry and the first kind of polishing pad. After the polishing processes are completed in the first and second polishing units 600a and 600b, the first and second groups of wafers are transferred to the polisher buffer station 136 by the first wafer transport device 140. The wafer transport device 140 can transfer the wafers of the first and second groups to and from the polishing units 600a and 600b so that all the wafers of one group are transferred first and then all the wafers of the other group are transferred. Alternatively, the wafer transport device 140 can transfer wafers to and from the first and second polishing units 600a and 600b in an alternating fashion.--

Please replace the paragraph [00231] beginning at page 50, line 28, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Next, the first group of wafers are transferred from the polisher buffer station 136 to the third polishing unit 600c by the second wafer transport device 140' and then polished in the third polishing unit 600c using a second kind of slurry and a second kind of polishing pad. The second group of wafers are transferred from the polisher buffer station 136 to the fourth polishing unit 600d by the second wafer transport device 140' and then polished in the fourth polishing unit 600d using the second kind of slurry and the second kind of polishing pad. After the polishing processes are completed in the third and fourth polishing units 600c and 600d, the first and second groups of wafers are transferred from the third and fourth polishing units 600c and 600d, respectively, to the cleaner buffer station 135 by the second

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wafer transport device 140' and then sent to the wafer cleaner 420 by the cleaner wafer transport device 350. The wafer transport device 140' can transfer the wafers of the first and second groups to and from the polishing units 600c and 600d so that all the wafers of one group are transferred first and then all the wafers of the other group are transferred. Alternatively, the wafer transport device 140' can transfer wafers to and from the third and fourth ~~first and second~~ polishing units 600c and 600d in an alternating fashion.--

Please replace the paragraph [00242] beginning at page 54, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The use of the modified wafer relay device 181 reduces the footprint of the polishing unit 150 by making it possible to position the pivoting shaft 184 over the polishing table 156 closer to the respective wafer carrier 162, and therefore, the pivoting point of the load/unload cup 182 is also closer to the respective wafer carrier 162. When the polishing pad 155 needs to be replaced or a new polishing pad needs to be attached onto the polishing table 156, the modified wafer relay device 181 ~~182~~ can be temporarily moved away from the polishing table 156.--

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